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WAYMARKS;

OR,

COUNSEL AND ENCOURAGEMENT FOR PENITENT SEEKERS
OF SALVATION.

BY E. H. DEWART.

SET THEE UP WAYMARKS.—JER. xxxi. 21.

TORONTO:

PRINTED AT THE WESLEYAN METHODIST PRINTING ESTABLISHMENT,
80 KING STREET EAST, AND 4 COURT STREET.

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RENTAL
FOR 12-TH



TO THE READER.

As this little treatise relates to matters of vital interest to you, and has been written with a sincere desire to afford help to those who are anxiously seeking deliverance from a sense of condemnation, and desiring to obtain the joy of salvation, it is earnestly requested that it be read thoughtfully, in circumstances as free as possible from distracting influences, and with fervent prayer, that God may make it a blessing to the soul of the Reader.

WAYMARKS;

OR,

COUNSEL AND ENCOURAGEMENT FOR PENITENT SEEKERS
OF SALVATION.

It is an important and critical point in our life, when the soul awakens from its slumbers, and becomes conscious of the grandeur and interest of its spiritual destiny, and of the sad evidences of ingratitude, enmity against God, and selfish folly, which blot and darken the past life; when guilty fear overshadows the conscience and shrouds the future, and the disquieted spirit, anxiously and despondingly seeks deliverance. To one who feels this burden of conscious condemnation, and sincerely desires to obtain an assurance of pardon and adoption, this tract is addressed; with a hope, that at such a time, a few plain words of warning and encouragement may be read with special interest and advantage.

I. FULLY RENOUNCE EVERY SIN. Many seek forgiveness with much apparent earnestness, and yet cling to some enslaving idol, some sinful habit, or some feeling of enmity and bitterness to others, which keeps them from attaining the blessing sought. *If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.* Many who

have a name to belong to Christ, make no progress, for the same reason: they hope to enjoy the advantages of religion, and still retain some of their pleasant and profitable sins. But this cannot be.

Ye cannot serve God and Mammon. If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee. You must chose whom you will serve. The heart must be fully surrendered to Christ before He will dwell in you the hope of glory. Any unholy attachment persisted in will keep you in darkness and condemnation. We must *lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us*, in order to *run with patience the race that is set before us*. And *whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, he cannot be my disciple*. Hence all need to pray fervently:—

“The dearest idol I have known,
What e’er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from thy throne,
And worship only Thee.”

II. GET IT DISTINCTLY FIXED IN YOUR MIND, THAT YOU CANNOT MERIT SALVATION BY YOUR OWN WORKS. IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD, RECEIVED BY FAITH. *For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.* When the trembling Jailor asked,—“*What must I do to be saved?*” Paul answered,—“*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thine house.*” And throughout the New Testament faith is constantly declared to be an essential condition of justification, yet there may be cases in which something must precede justifying

faith. On the day of Pentecost, to the question, *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* Peter answered,—*“Repent, and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”* To the young man who asked,—*“What shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life?”* Christ answered,—*“Sell all that thou hast, and distribute to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.”* Doubtless, because He saw that this was necessary to counteract the love of the world which ruled his heart. But, though a measure of faith in Divine truth must exist as the ground of penitence, in some cases hindrances may exist, which must first be removed before we can believe unto salvation; but in all, faith is essential to pardon. *He that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

But what is that faith which is the condition of justification? From its very simplicity, most attempts to explain the nature of faith have obscured it. Perhaps this is unavoidable. Without attempting any formal definition, we may say a few words about faith, which may aid you in comprehending the simplicity of its nature. It implies the giving up of the false views of God, which are cherished by the unrenewed heart, and the implicit reception of the truths respecting the Divine character, which are revealed in the Holy Scriptures. Wrong

views of God promote and strengthen unbelief. How many think only of God as a stern and angry judge, without fatherly sympathy or love. As if what we receive from Him was wrung from Him by our importunity, and given grudgingly, rather than freely. As if Christ only was merciful, and the Eternal Father had no feeling towards us but wrath. But this is all wrong. The Father is as merciful as the Son, and the Son is as just as the Father. It was our Father in heaven that *so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* His thoughts towards our fallen and guilty race are thoughts of mercy and peace.

True faith has its foundation in right views of God. A full conviction of the holiness and justice of God produces the feeling of conscious guilt and condemnation. A full, confiding belief in the mercy of God in Christ, brings peace. It implies the full renunciation of every other ground of confidence and hope, and the acceptance of Christ, with the assent of the understanding, and the trust of the heart, as our salvation. It is not enough that the mind be enlightened, and receive right views of Divine truth; this must be followed by the practical trust of the heart. Faith in Christ is not something essentially different from confidence in man. You know what it is to trust in the veracity and friendship of a fellow being, and to act upon this confidence. So faith in Christ is simply

trust and confidence in the word of Christ, in His faithfulness and love, in his willingness and power to save you, and to save you now, freely and graciously, for His own mercy's sake. It is fully believing that He will do what He has promised, saying humbly, but confidently from the heart,

“Me, with all my sins I cast,
On the atoning blood.”

III. BEWARE OF SEEKING LANGUIDLY, AS IF MERELY SOME SECONDARY INTEREST WERE AT STAKE. *It is no vain thing, it is your life.* You are seeking blessings so important, that, if you fail to secure them, you are forever undone. You are asking light for your darkness, pardon for your guilt, strength for your weakness, healing for your soul's deadly malady, a title to heaven's blessedness, and a meetness for its holy and immortal fellowship. Let the greatness of the blessings sought, impel you to seek with an earnestness proportioned to their inestimable worth. If you are seeking feebly, you cannot have rightly estimated the value of the blessings you ask. You are yet resting in shallow and imperfect views of your guilt and danger, and need to pray earnestly that God would give you true views of yourself. *It is an evil thing, and bitter, that thou hast departed from the Lord thy God.* It is against His love and faithfulness you have sinned. It is His mercy you have slighted and neglected. It is His wrath that unforgiven sin will draw down upon your unsheltered head. There is no hope for you but in His mercy. If He save you

not, you must remain forever unsaved and unblest. Cry mightily therefore to God for mercy. Christ himself, *in the days of his flesh, offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, to Him that was able to save Him from death.* God's promise to you is, *and ye shall seek me and find me, when ye have searched for me with all your heart.* Never relax your earnestness *until the Sun of Righteousness arise in your heart with healing in his wings. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away,* continue to plead, *I will not let Thee go unless Thou bless me.*

IV. SOME SEEK FOR A SHORT TIME, BECOME DISCOURAGED, AND GIVE UP THE STRUGGLE BEFORE FINDING THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE. How can such persons be really sincere? If ever there was reason to be anxious and earnest to secure salvation, that reason still exists with unchanged force. God is unchangeably holy and just. Sin is unchangeably degrading and ruinous. Mercy and salvation are ever unspeakably desirable. It is not safe to yield to discouragement, and sink back into indifference. This last state is worse than the first. Rest not without the joy of salvation. Let your faith and prayers have a definite object, and plead the Divine promises as the ground of your expectation. Keep it clearly before your mind that it is your privilege to have the assurance of God's favor—the witness of the Holy Spirit with your spirit that you are a child of God. Beware of soothing a disturbed conscience with some reforma-

tion in conduct and a stricter attendance on religious duties, while the sentence of condemnation still remains, sternly written against you. There is no need that you should settle down with a false peace. True peace and rest are promised in Christ and may be yours. As Mr. Fletcher says, "Better go on thy way weeping, till thou hast really found the pearl of great price, than to rest in a hasty conceit that thou hast found it, when thou hast not. Let the cry of your heart be,—

"Short of thy love I would not stop,
A stranger to the Gospel hope,
The sense of sin forgiven;
I would not, Lord, my soul deceive,
Without the inward witness live,
That antepast of heaven."

There may be times when the skies seem shrouded with despair, and every star of hope and promise is hidden from your sight. All that you had deemed fixed and sure seems to reel and totter around you. A sense of uncertainty oppresses you. You are ready to doubt everything; and the adversary of your soul taunts you with these very doubts (which he himself suggested) to bring you back into the slavery of despair. *Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure. Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.* In the darkness God is near, though our unbelief apprehends Him not. Many of God's most honored servants have passed through a Red Sea of doubt and darkness into the promised rest

of faith, where the light of God's countenance scatters the shadows of guilty fear away.

V. DO NOT WAIT FOR THE FEELING OF JOY AND PEACE TO SPRING UP IN THE HEART, BEFORE YOU BELIEVE IN CHRIST. First believe, and then you shall see the salvation of God. Peace is the fruit of faith. Sometimes a penitent sinner keeps looking into his own heart, to find something in its condition that would warrant him to trust in Christ. But we can never discover anything in ourselves that would justify such confidence. The ground of our confidence is Christ himself. It is a right apprehension of the faithfulness, power, and compassion of Christ, presented by the Holy Spirit, which alone can inspire true faith in the heart. Neither is it right to take any special type of experience, and imagine you must have a precisely similar experience. That may never be. Difference of mental character will produce corresponding difference in the outer phases or circumstances of conversion. *There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.* The great matter is to get the heart changed from sin to holiness; and to possess an assurance of God's adopting love, and the joy of His salvation. Whether that experience is realized,—like a sudden flash of light scattering the darkness, or as the gradual dawn of the morning,—is quite a secondary matter. Seek the blessings your soul needs, leaving the manner and way, in which your desires shall be fulfilled, to the all-wise God.

VI. PERHAPS YOU HAVE ALREADY YIELDED TO THE DESPONDENCY WITH WHICH UNBELIEF SO OFTEN ENFEEBLES THOSE WHO ARE SEEKING SALVATION. You say in your heart, "I could have some hope that my prayers would be answered, were I not so utterly unworthy of His grace. It is too much for me to expect that God will ever forgive all my sins, heal my back-slidings, and give me the seal of his favor." It would indeed be too much to hope for, if the ground of that expectation was any goodness or merit in yourself, anything you have done or can do. But it is not too much to expect from the infinite love of our Father in Heaven. Not too much to expect from Him who shed his precious blood to redeem us from sin and death, and who ever liveth to make intercession for us. But you exclaim, "Ah! I am so great a sinner; I have so long and wilfully rejected the salvation of the Gospel, that I dare not hope for mercy." Though you are a great sinner, Christ the great Physician is mighty to save. Yield not to despair. No dark decree of reprobation throws its shadow across the path of a sinner's approach to Christ. No stain is too deep for Him to wash away. God has solemnly sworn that He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. Listen to His words of boundless mercy and love.

Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Ho! every one that thirsteth,

come ye to the waters. Look unto me all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved. He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. And He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. For ALL the sins of ALL the world. Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. He gave Himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time. Can you doubt these gracious assurances? Heaven and earth shall pass away, but His word shall endure for ever.

If all this is not sufficient, look to Calvary. There behold in the death of Christ the glorious display of the everlasting love with which God loved our guilty race, and let it rebuke your unfounded fears. *He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?* And as you wonder at the grace that led the blessed Redeemer to die for us, remember there is no change in His love. *He is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. The same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him.* Consider how greatly your unbelief dishonors Christ. You profess to believe in His power and willingness to bless, and yet you doubt His word; as if He did not really mean what He says, when He promises rest to the weary and heavy-laden who come to Him. If some kind earthly friend, in whose good-will you had confidence, had power to forgive and bless you, you would have no hesitation in

believing he would do it freely. But you greatly wrong the blessed Redeemer, when you think of Him as less willing to save you than the dearest earthly friend. His love vastly surpasses all your unbelieving thoughts. He loves with an everlasting love. *He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. Be not afraid, only believe.*

“He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
He sets the prisoner free,
His blood can make the foulest clean,
His blood availed for thee.”

VII. BEWARE OF THE DANGEROUS TENDENCY TO DELAY, WHICH HAS CAUSED THE RUIN OF MULTITUDES. Many who once seemed to be “not far from the kingdom of God,” have come short of obtaining salvation, by putting off to some future time the act of closing in with Christ, and trusting in Him. As soon as the prodigal son had resolved, *he arose and came to his father.* There is nothing to be gained by delay. The excuses by which it is justified will not bear an impartial scrutiny. Your guilt will not grow less by waiting. Christ is as worthy of your acceptance and full confidence now as He ever will be. God, the Father, will not become more merciful, nor the Redeemer more willing to receive you, nor the Holy Spirit more ready to renew your heart by delay. Every moment you delay to accept Christ by faith, you dishonor his grace and endanger your soul’s safety. You cannot prepare yourself to come to Jesus.

“All the fitness He requires,
Is to feel your need of Him.”

If ever you are saved, you must be saved for Christ's sake, by God's free grace, and not for the sake of any worthiness in yourself. And as there must be a point of time when you will let go every other ground of hope, and trustingly venture on Christ to forgive and save you, why not now venture confidently upon his faithful and gracious promises, and trust for salvation to his infinite love? *Come, for all things are now ready. Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.* Nothing is wanting but your hearty acceptance of his offered mercy. There is no risk in trusting in him. *He that believeth on Him is not condemned.* Fear not, He will not fail you in your soul's need. The everlasting arms of love are extended to receive you. Even now, O trembling and doubting one, He rebukes your delay! *Ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life.* He asks,—*Wilt thou be made whole? Dost thou believe upon the Son of God?* Hesitate no longer. Dare to believe. Let your heart reply, *Lord, I believe: help Thou my unbelief.*

“With faith I plunge me in this sea;
Here is my hope, my joy, my rest;
Hither, when hell assails I flee;
I look into my Saviour's breast.
Away, sad doubt and anxious fear!
Mercy is all that's written there.”

